AKA Kiteboarding Committee

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I. Welcome to AKA Kiteboarding [top]

The AKA Kiteboarding Committee is proud to support this exciting new sport that is taking the world by storm. The AKA has promoted the safe enjoyment of kite flying for over a quarter century across America. Kiteboarding provides thrills and excitement both for the rider and for spectators. If this sport is approached with appropriate training, knowledge, judgment and suitable gear it can be safer than many other "extreme sports" such as hang gliding, deep diving, or off trail skiing. In reality each year many million hours are spent by kiteboarders on the water worldwide without out their experiencing any serious accidents or incidents. If the sport of kiteboarding isn't approached with appropriate knowledge and caution it has the potential to be quite dangerous. The AKA is committed to aiding the improvement of safety practiced in the sport and is approaching this goal in the following way:

- 1. Guiding new participants to an effective and safety oriented entry into Kiteboarding.
- 2. Promotion of safe and responsible kiteboarding practices through the Safe Kiteboarding Guidelines and through other initiatives.
- 3. The support of existing AKA affiliated Kiteboarding Associations and providing information resources and encouragement to individuals looking to form new kiteboarding associations and clubs.

If you have questions or suggestions, the AKA Kiteboarding Committee may be contacted by email at: kitesurf@aka.kite.org.

II. How to Start [top]

So, you have seen the sport and want to get into it, what do you do? First locate a good kiteboarding school or instructor and arrange for adequate lessons.



Your first experience with a kiteboarding traction kite should be during proper professional instruction. Even if it means traveling a distance, spending some weekends or a vacation at the beach to seek good professional kiteboarding instruction, it is worth it. Good professional training should safely speed your entry into kiteboarding, spare your expensive kite gear from avoidable damage and help to preserve your access to kiteboarding areas. Please contact your local kiteboarding association or shops or check kiteboarding publications for leads on instructors and related information.

Prior to or during your kiteboarding instruction it would also be a good idea to get a small trainer kite, an introduction to kiteboarding video and to invest some time in understanding each thoroughly. Several good introduction to kiteboarding videos have been released in the past few years. These videos may be available at your local kiteboarding store or can be found online through Internet retailers by using the phrase "kitesurfing instructional video" and your favorite search engine. Watching an intro video 6 or 8 times and trying to learn the basic skills and precautions should help to safely accelerate your entry into the sport. Spending several hours with the smaller trainer kite will help you develop essential kite control skills that will help you with larger traction kiteboarding kites both during and after kiteboarding instruction. Larger kiteboarding traction kites should be used over water and NEVER over land for extended periods of time for learning kite control. Put that power where it can create the most fun not hazards.



Once you have completed adequate lessons, you will need to practice. While you are learning this sport "distance is your friend!" Please locate a beach or time when there are few other beach goers or bathers or hard objects nearby for practicing body dragging in the water and water starting (i.e. getting up on your board). The idea is to safely gain skill and control without causing complaints or incidents that could lead to accidents or restrictions on the practice of your new sport. Everyone has occasional loss of kite control and distance provides an essential buffer for safety. Your local association and kiteboarding instructor should have good ideas on suitable beaches for practice. It is also good to join up with other kiteboarders through your kiteboarding association, shop or at the beach to exchange ideas with and to learn from. Please practice the safe kiteboarding guidelines listed in the next section. Following these guidelines and other appropriate practices to maximize enjoyment and minimize risk and complaints. Once you have successfully come to this point, you are well on your way to safely entering into this exciting new sport.

If there is no way possible for you to take professional kiteboarding lessons and you are committed to learning on your own, this may be attempted but at a lower level of safety. Such individuals are encouraged to spend at least 6 hours or more using a training kite. It is recommended that you watch two or more of the introduction to kiteboarding videos listed at the end of this section many times. The lessons and techniques should sink in during these viewings. Review and thoroughly understand the safe kiteboarding guidelines. When you are ready after thorough work with the trainer kite and videos, get a 5 m two line inflatable kite for the next step in training. You should practice in an area free of bystanders for at least 100 ft. downwind, obstructions, trees, buildings or power lines. Rig the 5 m kite on leader lines only or on the heavier cord that extends away from the control bar on the order of 10 to 15 ft. Carefully practice full kite control in all feasible directions, water relaunching of the kite, use of the kite depowering leash, assisted launch and landings until you are comfortable with all these skills.

After you have successfully achieved this level then rig the kite with 30 m flight lines. This part of your practice should be in the water and at least 100 ft offshore. Practice body dragging and learn how to suddenly power the kite and to constantly maintain stability and control. Once you have practiced body dragging several times and have maintained kite control throughout, it is time to try waterstarting with a kiteboard. Once you have learned to waterstart continue to hone your kiteboarding skills by doing downwind kiteboarding runs. Always following the safe kiteboarding guidelines and other prudent practices.

III. Safe Kiteboarding Guidelines [top]

These safe kiteboarding guidelines have been prepared with the intent of improving kiteboarder and bystander safety. These procedures have been derived from other guidelines from around the world and from lessons learned from actual accidents and incidents. Kiteboarding can be potentially dangerous both to the rider and to bystanders, particularly if practiced without adequate training, knowledge and caution. Riders must accept that even if these guidelines are followed that accidents and/or injury may occur. Kiteboarders should follow these guidelines, area specific guidelines if applicable and other prudent and safe practices in an attempt to maintain safety and continued access to beaches for kiteboarding. Using good judgment is key to kiteboarding safely. These guidelines are updated regularly so please check the FKA website for the latest version.

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

- 1. JUMP TO HELP KITEBOARDERS. Readily help other riders with launching and landing using reliable agreed upon visual and audible communications. Whether you are starting out or are almost a pro, your help may avoid a serious incident/accident and possible restrictions. NEVER grab the lines of a flying or powered kite. Get involved with your local association or club and with area riders to try to preserve access to kiteboard. If you see someone putting your access at risk by poor practices, grab several of your friends and have a friendly talk with the guy, show some interest followed by your concerns. Riders are solely responsible for their safety and that of effected bystanders. If you are new to an area or visiting, seek out local kiteboarders, shops and/or associations for local guidelines and tips BEFORE riding. Don't ruin things for the local riders.
- 2. GET ADEQUATE PRO KITEBOARDING TRAINING. Kiteboarders, particularly beginners should seek adequate, quality professional instruction. Beginners must avoid crowded areas particularly as kite control is still being developed. Beginners should body drag out at least 300 ft. (60m) from shore prior to water starting and should always stay out of guarded or restricted beach areas. Be careful in your launch area selection and be willing to drive and walk a bit further to have more ideal conditions. Build your skill and experience carefully in side or side onshore winds less than 15 kts. ideally, you should advance faster and more safely for your effort. Riders have been injured for choosing poor launches when far safer conditions were relatively close by. Be particularly careful in new conditions and at the START and END of the riding season. Many accidents

- occur in these times even among experienced riders. In kiteboarding, "DISTANCE IS YOUR FRIEND," so use it!
- 3. KITEBOARD WITHIN YOUR LIMITS. Know your equipment's limitations as well as your own. If you aren't 100% healthy OR IN DOUBT, DON'T FLY! You should be comfortable with conditions and your gear otherwise, don't launch and "live to fly another day." Always maintain an energy reserve while out kiteboarding. Hydrate regularly and wear adequate exposure clothing (wetsuit/dry suit), to deal with unexpected time in the water. Cold water kiteboarding requires additional critically important precautions as compared to warmer conditions and are beyond the scope of these guidelines. Don't kiteboard alone or further from shore than you are readily able to swim in from.
- 4. USE A KITE LEASH, QUICK RELEASE, HELMET, IMPACT VEST and other reasonable safety gear. Make sure you have proper safety equipment, such as a tested, well maintained kite depowering leash securely attached to your body, a good well fitting helmet, impact vest, gloves, whistle and hook knife. Most kiteboarding fatalities involve head injury. A good helmet for kiteboarding, MAY aid in reducing injury and improve the chance of survival in many but not necessarily all impacts. A helmet is NO excuse to kiteboard carelessly. Regularly test and maintain a reliable chicken loop or kite depowering release. Relying upon manual unhooking alone to release your bar is UNRELIABLE based upon the accident experience. The rider needs to understand and accept that in an emergency, this quick release MAY NOT be accessible or function correctly in the critical seconds of the emergency. It is up to the rider to avoid the emergency in the first place and to aid proper function of the release through practice and maintenance.
- 5. LAUNCH, RIDE AND LAND WELL AWAY FROM BYSTANDERS. Give way to the public on the beach and in the water at ALL TIMES. Be courteous and polite to bystanders. Complaints have frequently led to bans and restrictions on kiteboarding in some areas and continue to do so on a regular basis. NEVER launch, ride or land upwind of nearby bystanders. Work to keep a minimum 300 ft. (100 m) buffer zone from bystanders.
- 6. BE AWARE OF THE WEATHER. Is the forecast and current weather acceptable, free of pending storm clouds and excessive gusty winds? Color radar can sometimes give a clue as to violent storm/gust potential. Are seas and wind condition within your experience, ability and appropriate for your gear? New kiters should practice in lighter, side or side onshore winds. Onshore winds have a much higher injury rate even among experienced riders and should be avoided. Offshore winds should be avoided in the absence of a chase boat. If storm clouds are moving in, land and thoroughly disable your kite well in advance of any change in wind or temperature, if necessary depower your kite while still away from shore. Lightning can strike many miles ahead of storm clouds. Learn about unstable weather in your area and work to avoid squalls and storms through TV, radio and Internet information. Consider organizing an alert air horn and flag signal for your launch as a warning to riders of pending unstable weather.

- 1. USE GOOD LAUNCH AREAS. Make sure your launch is open, FREE OF DOWNWIND BYSTANDERS, hard objects, nearby power lines, buildings and walls, etc. within at least 300 ft. (100 m), and preferably more particularly in higher wind. Too many riders have slammed into walls, parked cars, trees with better launches not so far away at all. Some riders have needed in excess of 600 ft. (200 m), to regain control in violent dragging or loftings in higher winds. Avoid kiteboarding near airports and in low flight path areas, complaints have led to restricted access in some areas. Never fly your kite in the path of low aircraft in flight, moving your kite low to the water at the first indication of inbound aircraft.
- 2. WHAT SIZE KITE ARE OTHER RIDERS USING? Check to see what size kite other kiteboarders are rigging and get their input on conditions. Try to select a kite size for the lower to middle part of the wind range. Do not rig too large a kite for conditions and carefully consider advice of more experienced riders. Failure to act on prudent advice has cost some riders severe injury and even death. If you don't have a small enough kite to safely launch, DON'T!
- 3. CHECK & REPAIR YOUR GEAR BEFORE YOU FLY. Check your kite for tears or leaky bladders. If you have leaky bladders or tears in your kite, repair them before flying. Check ALL kite, harness, and control bar lines, webbing, pigtails, bridles, the chicken loop and leaders for knots, cuts, wear or abrasion. If the line sheathing shows any breaks or knots, replace them. The pigtails should be replaced no less frequently than every 6 months on inflatable kites. Inspect and test your quick release. Frequently, mentally and physically rehearse pulling your quick release in an imagined emergency situation. Make sure your flying lines are equal as they will stretch unevenly with use. If they have knots that can't be easily untied, replace your flight lines. Do not casually make changes to manufactured equipment. What ever you do must work reliably in what conditions may come.
- 4. AVOID SOLO LAUNCHING. Solo launching and landing are NOT recommended and should be avoided particularly in stronger winds. Launch with a trained assistant, using reliable audible and visual signals. If solo launching make sure your kite is properly anchored with a substantial quantity of sand to avoid premature launch. Never use untrained bystanders to help you launch or land. Riders have been severely injured by making this easy mistake. Rig your kite for solo launch at the last minute and launch without delay AFTER CAREFUL PREFLIGHTING as serious accidents have happened in only minutes during this stage. If you leave the kite unattended, wrap up your lines, deflate the kite's leading edge and roll it up. It is best to place the kite in a bag to avoid UV and wind damage.
- 5. CROSSED KITE LINES CAN WRECK YOUR DAY. Launching with crossed or snagged lines has maimed quite a few kiteboarders as the kite tends to fly up at very high speed, dragging or lofting the rider into a nearby hard objects faster than they can react. Walk down your lines and examine them carefully. Pick your bar up and carefully look down the lines for twists, tangles or snags that could cause the kite to be dangerously uncontrollable. While you are holding your bar up look down the lines, shake your bar to make sure the center lines are connected to the leading edge of the kite. Be particularly careful, slow and methodical in high winds. Multiple, careful preflighting in higher winds is strongly advised.

Rigging "Kook Proof" connectors on our kite and lines is easily done with most kites and should be rigged on all your kites and bars.

LAUNCHING AND GETTING UNDERWAY

- 1. LAUNCH & LAND UNHOOKED WITH A GOOD BUFFER ZONE. Avoid hooking in or connecting with your quick release, while onshore or near hard objects. Practice LAUNCHING AND LANDING "UNHOOKED" or not connected to your chicken loop. Pull in your trim strap or rope entirely or to a point that will allow stable kite flight with existing wind conditions, to properly depower the kite before launching and so that you can readily hold the bar and release it if necessary. Always maintain minimum clear downwind buffer zones, particularly while flying unhooked. Physically and mentally rehearse managing emergency situations including just "letting go" of your bar. Connect to your quick release once you are well offshore. Question: IF you have a proper buffer zone AND your kite properly depowers upon release, WHAT is the downside of launching unhooked? That is considering you could be spared from a real slamming one of these days if you stay hooked in during launch and landing.
- 2. KEEP IT LOW & GO! ... to try to avoid lofting or involuntary lifting. DO NOT bring your kite much above 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 m) from the ground and NEVER to the vertical, within 300 ft. (100 m) of shore or any hard object. Never launch, fly or land upwind and close to the shore or hard objects or stand on the beach for extended with your kite in the air. This careless practice has killed and maimed riders. This practice MAY reduce the chance of lofting but may also promote dragging and serious injury in gusty/strong wind conditions. So, if you are dragged be ready to depower instantly and ideally before the dragging starts in the first place. HAZARD AVOIDANCE IS THE KEY along with rapid preemptive, rehearsed actions. Do not fly your kite near vertical or sloped surfaces that can cause uplift and sudden dragging/lofting (walls, buildings, hills, tree lines, etc.). Avoid thermal generating areas as sudden thermal lofting can occur. Launch in the appropriate part of the wind window to avoid "hot" or over-powered downwind launches. Make sure that there are no bystanders within your downwind buffer zone or close by in general.
- 3. GET OFFSHORE AND STAY THERE. Go offshore at least 300 ft. (100 M) WITHOUT DELAY after launch. Stay beyond 300 ft. until time to come in. If there are substantial waves where you need to put on your board consider body dragging outside the breaker zone first. The fun is offshore, danger to the rider & bystanders is near shore where most of the hard stuff is located.
- 4. YIELD THE RIGHT OF WAY. Yield the right of way to all others in the water. Riders must yield to others when jumping, to anyone on your right hand side and to launching riders. When in doubt, STOP. Kiteboarders should not jump within a buffer zone of at least two hundred feet (60 m) of others and objects that are downwind. Always be aware of the position of your lines relative to others, line cuts can be severe and tangled lines with another kite, deadly.
- 5. BOARD LEASHES ARE DANGEROUS. All kiteboarders are encouraged to master body dragging for board recovery. Use of a board leash is dangerous and is

- generally discouraged due to the hazards of board rebound or wave driven impact. Injuries have happened with both fixed length and reel leashes. Wearing a helmet and impact vest is always advised but may not provide adequate projection against board impact as the boards can and have violently hit any part of the rider and have penetrated helmets. If there is risk of your loose board hitting bathers, find another launch.
- 6. DON'T GET LOFTED! Lofting or involuntarily lifting is one of the greatest hazards of kiteboarding. Avoiding unstable weather, keeping your kite low and getting offshore without delay are only a few of the measures necessary to avoid this threat. If despite all precautions you are dragged or lofted a short distance AND have time to react, depower your kite as soon as you start to pause. You will likely be dulled by shock so mentally rehearse depowering immediately under such circumstances. Depowering ideally should occur before you are lofted, still offshore and away from hard objects. Multiple gusts can hit over a short period and you may be lofted a second or third time, so ACT to depower your kite as soon as you can. DO NOT ASSUME that you will have a lull between loftings, sometimes you do and sometimes you don't. If you are air born over land, it is uncertain how and if you will come out of things. Focus on controlling your kite with small control inputs to avoid stalling the kite. Some have advised keeping the kite overhead AFTER you are lofted and to try to gently steer towards the least hazardous are to impact. Other riders have said that reversing direction or transitioning after lofting has helped to reduce forward speed. It would be wise to accept and plan for the fact that YOU CAN BE LOFTED AT ANYTIME you have a kite in the air.

LANDING

- 1. USE ASSISTED LANDINGS BUT ... SOLO DEPOWER IMMEDIATELY IF NECESSARY! Approach the shore slowly with caution. Keep your kite low (ideally within 10 to 20 ft. of the surface), to try avoid lofting. Take care to avoid causing an accidental jump in well powered conditions while approaching the shore. Arrange for assisted landings at least 300 ft. (100 m) from bystanders, power lines, vertical surfaces, etc.. NEVER use non-kiteboarders for assisted launches or landings, as use of bystanders has resulted in severe rider injuries. Use mutually understood hand and voice signals to improve launch and landing safety. Riders have been killed standing around looking for an assisted landing when gusts have hit. IF IN ANY DOUBT, DEPOWER YOUR KITE even if you are still offshore. ALL riders should be comfortable with depowering their kite immediately even in deep water and swimming in to avoid being lofted or dragged in sudden gusting winds.
- 2. PROPERLY STOW YOUR GEAR. Properly anchor (or ideally deflate your leading edge and roll up your kite), disconnect and wind up your kite lines. Do not allow your kite to be accidentally launched. Kites should be placed in a safe area well out of bystander and vehicular traffic.

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LOCAL KITEBOARDING GUIDELINES FOR

(e.g. necessary area specific precautions and restrictions)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

An example follows:

LOCAL KITEBOARDING GUIDELINES FOR BOCA RATON, FL

The following guidelines have been prepared to aid kiteboarding safety and access privileges at the City of Boca Raton Beach in the vicinity of Spanish River Blvd. These practices and other appropriate procedures should be followed while kiteboarding off this beach.

- 1. New kitesurfers must seek adequate, proper instruction BEFORE or while kiteboarding here.
- 2. Launch and land north of lifeguard stand #20 located due east of Spanish River Blvd. No launching or landing is permitted at guarded beaches.

IV. How to "Keep" Kiteboarding [top]

It is important to work to maintain kiteboarding access without restrictions where ever you launch and ride. This means new kiteboarders seeking proper instruction and practicing well away from bystanders and crowded areas.



Once you have advanced in kiteboarding, have developed some skills and even some tricks you can really rip loose and show the world how it is done, right?! Yes and no. As long as you follow the safe kiteboarding guidelines and other

responsible practices, yes go to it and show the world. The guidelines are designed to try to avoid accidents, incidents and complaints. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency shown by some kiteboarders to ignore good practices and the safe kiteboarding guidelines. So what, we are all adults or at least most of us, we can do what we want? Out in the boonies, far away from others, you may be right. Near other people in populated areas, we have to be careful if we are to maintain unrestricted kiteboarding access. This has been proven by the creation of restrictions in some areas already. When you travel to a new area, please research local restrictions or guidelines, if any, with the local kiteboarding association, kiteboarding shops or riders before you go out.

This sport can be dangerous to both the participant and to bystanders if it is not approached with suitable caution and good judgment. If caution, good judgment and the safe kiteboarding guidelines are ignored it becomes easy to cause complaints and potentially incidents and accidents followed by restrictions on kiteboarding. It has happened many times already, testing the limits will only result in restricting what ideally should be a free sport, if practiced intelligently and responsibly.

So, what should you do? Read, understand and practice the safe kiteboarding guidelines. Always be courteous to bystanders and beach goers, help other kiteboarders when needed and generally use common sense. Also encourage other kiteboarders to follow suit. If you see someone ignoring the safe kiteboarding guidelines putting the free practice of your sport in jeopardy. Please talk with them as tactfully and persuasively as you can to protect your access. If you have a kiteboarding association or club report the situation to the leadership so they can formulate an effective solution if needed. If you are aware of problems with the lifeguards or governing authority notify your kiteboarding organization. If you have a kiteboarding association or club, join it and support it. If you don't have one, consider forming one, it is the logical thing to do to keep out there flying. The AKA would like to help.

V. Kiteboarding Clubs and Associations [top]

A. Why are they important?

Kiteboard Clubs and Associations have been formed to promote safety and continued access to beaches and launches for kiteboarding. Our numbers are mounting by the month and incidents and accidents are also becoming more frequent. Some launches are imposing restrictions or are thinking about doing so. Associations and clubs act to serve the interests of the kiteboarding community and advocate and negotiate over issues important to them. They provide local leadership and a point of contact for officials that might have concerns regarding this sport. Clubs and Associations distribute and promote safe kiteboarding guidelines to improve safety and to aid in maintaining access.

B. How to form a kiteboarding club?

It is relatively easy to form a kiteboarding club. Start with some goals, get the word out, discuss local issues and solutions with other riders and you are on your way. More details follow:

1. Figure out the goals of the club and area of coverage. Ideal goals would be to promote kiteboarding safety and maintenance of access to local launches. The

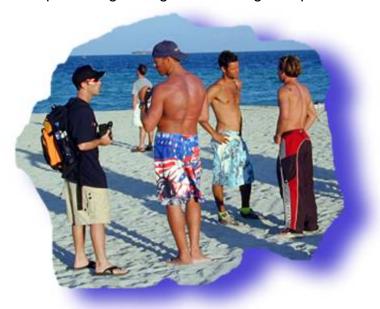
club could also organize fly-ins, clinics, competitions, flea markets and even negotiate with local officials to try to maintain or restore access. In these ways a club can be very similar to an association only smaller and less wide spread geographically.

- 2. Approach people to join. This can be done at the beach, over the Internet, through local shops and person-to-person. All it takes is two and hopefully more will follow with time.
- 3. Setup an initial meeting for a fixed date and time. Circulating a written announcement with a short itinerary would be a good idea.
- 4. Discuss local issues including launches, problem areas for resolution, improved procedures and potential local safe kiteboarding guidelines. The local guidelines should supplement the AKA kiteboarding guidelines to address local conditions and restrictions. Identify suitable launches for beginners versus more technical launches that are more appropriate for experienced riders. Identify an individual or a group of riders who will write the local guidelines.
- 5. Circulate the draft guidelines for comments and modification before finalizing them. Distribute the final guidelines to the membership. Become an affiliate of the AKA.
- 6. Try to promote awareness of the guidelines and compliance with them. Encourage members to approach and tactfully discuss the guidelines with other riders and those that might not be following suitable practices.
- 7. Encourage local instructors to put on clinics at fly-ins or festivals.
- 8. It is important to secure local approvals and permits if necessary for organized events. A safety plan should be prepared planning for various scenarios and a safety officer designated.
- C. How To Form a Kiteboarding Association One approach that has been used for the formation of kiteboarding associations in the USA appears below.
- 1. Talk with other kiteboarders, kiteboarding retailers, lifeguards and park rangers about concerns they have about kiteboarders, kiteboarding access, specific incidents, ongoing problems, etc. Make a list of concerns, potential restrictions and problems to be resolved.
- Form a list on yahoogroups.com. Post the creation of your group on other existing kiteboarding lists and spread the word through kiteboarders and kiteboard retailers in your area. This list could be your initial primary means of communication with members. An example of this approach for the Florida Kitesurfing Association, an AKA affiliate, appears at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FKSA/
 - Other approaches are presented for various Chapters of the Hawiian Kiteboarding Associations, appear at:
 - http://www.hawaiikiteboardingassociation.org/chapters/mainchapters.htm Finally another approach is presented for the San Diego Kiteboarding Association, appears at: http://www.sdka.org/
- Identify potential area coordinators (ACs), in your area or state. ACs could be people involved in the kiteboarding business, retailers and instructors as well as other experienced, concerned kiteboarders. Initially the AC volunteers

would be responsible for helping to write and comment upon area specific safe kiteboarding guidelines, distributing them to local kiteboarders in their areas, encouraging membership in the kiteboarding group and warning the group in advance of potential kiteboarding access problems. ACs may be individuals already involved with local kiteboarding groups. ACs would be encouraged to form and participate in local kiteboarding chapters of the association. At some point assistant ACs can be designated and committees formed to aid in association goals and functions.

- 4. Circulate the draft area specific kiteboarding guidelines among the ACs that address unique local conditions and restrictions. Finalize the area specific guidelines and post them in the "Files" section of the list site.
- 5. Post a listing of ACs in the "Files" section of the list.
- 6. Try to build up membership on the list. Solicit volunteers to help with website creation and the services of an attorney to aid with the formation of a nonprofit corporation.
- 7. Select directors or officers for the initial non-profit corporation. Once membership has been built to a sufficient level elections can be held for the continuing designation of officers.
- 8. Example By-laws and Articles for Incorporation appear in another file on this site (pending).
- 9. A nonprofit corporation will aid to the collection of tax free membership fees and will provide some protection to organization officers by the "corporate shield". A federal tax id number should be obtained. At some point after formation form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption should be files (see http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/k1023.pdf). The volunteer services of a CPA or attorney would be helpful in the preparation of this filing.
- 10. Once the nonprofit corporation has been formed actual paid membership can be sought.
- 11. Once four or more members of the group join the American Kitefliers Association, the organization should file for affiliated status under the AKA.
- 12. Promotion of individual membership in the AKA is strongly encouraged. It is required for individuals participating in kiteboarding events in order to be coverage by the event insurance.
- 13. Collection of annual dues to permit the formation of a "war chest" and to help to defray costs is encouraged.
- 14. It will be necessary to obtain a checking account in the name of the nonprofit entity and a Post Office Box for mail.
- 15. Promote your organization through competitions, public works, beach cleanups, kite flying demo days, press releases, newspaper and magazine articles, etc. Encourage ACs to promote interest and participation in your organization with kiteboarding retailers and instructors. Create a kiteboarding instructors database as a service on your groups list in the files section. Your groups list files could eventually form much of the content of your groups website.
- 16. Solicit merchant members such as gear retailers and schools of your association and club. Good reciprocal relationships can be built where the

- merchant members can support events and receive good exposure to the riding community.
- 17. When issues or problems come up, discuss them with ACs and with the AKA Kiteboarding Committee. Provide the benefit of your experience and ideas to other groups throughout the world through the AKA.
- D. Tips for Organizing Kiteboarding Competitions and Festivals



(PENDING)

- E. Interacting With the Community
- 1. Lifeguard, Ranger and City Official Orientation to Kiteboarding
- a. A very effective technique for trying to secure launches is to organize orientation sessions to kiteboarding for local lifeguards, park rangers and even city officials. Ask a local kiteboarding instructor to give this session if possible. The session includes two aspects including hands on experience with a trainer kite and smaller traction kites on land and for rescue personnel, running through the various means of rescuing distressed kiteboarders and securing runaway kites.



- b. Meet with the captain or head of the local lifeguard squad or rangers. Express your concern for coordinating local kiteboarding activity to where it will occur in the safest, the least disruptive and most compatible manner with other users as possible. You could even suggest preparing local kiteboarding guidelines in supplement to the Safe Kiteboarding Guidelines if necessary for local conditions. These local guidelines would spell out restrictions for launching and landing areas for kites, areas to avoid, minimum skill requirements, etc. Several examples of local guidelines appear below.
- c. The orientation session can be announced by a notice on the guard's or ranger's bulletin board for a convenient time after work or it could be scheduled during hours if approved by the captain. If possible it would be good to have a few orientation sessions on different dates to improve participation.
- d. Bring one or more trainers kites and go over basic kite handling. Move on to a small 5 m kitesurfing kite on leaders or 20 m flight lines. It will be necessary to launch and hand the control bar to individuals. It is important that they develop a personal appreciation for the power of even a small kite like this as well as how to do basic maneuvering. Go over basic safety considerations such as launch, landing and line safety, kite-depowering leashes. Demonstrate use of the depowering leash, proper launch and landing. Each participant should spend several minutes flying the kites. Ideally they will develop some judgment for apparent rider skill, i.e. a novice with no clue in need of instruction vs. a competent rider that should be able to safely launch and land near or off public beaches. If you have prepared local guidelines go over them during the orientation session. Providing hook knives for rescue craft is a nice gesture. Also it is good to provide a listing of local kiteboarding instructors with contact information so that this can be given to new kiteboarders in need of training by the lifeguards or rangers. It would be ideal to induce a few of the participants into getting into kiteboarding. The instructor and local shops should be asked to provide discount lessons and gear to lifeguards, rangers or city officials. For the few participants that get into and subsequently become hooked on this incredible sport, you will have gained strong allies in an important place in an effort to maintain access.

- e. In lightly populated areas, local guidelines may not be needed as long as there is no launch or water related hazards to provide warnings about. In moderately populated areas it may be necessary to prepare guidelines that may even restrict access to designated launch corridor areas to riders that are able to stay upwind. This reduces the potential launches for new riders but should reduce or eliminate the ill-advised practice of mixing new riders with bathers.
- f. The rescue orientation will largely be configured by the amount of available time and resources. At a minimum the various rescue scenarios and responses should be discussed. Staging mock rescue of distressed kiters from the beach and from a boat would be ideal. Scenarios may include:
- 1) Proper intercepting and depowering of a runaway kite with or without rescuing the rider from either the shore or a boat.
- 2) Rescue of a distressed but conscious kiteboarder with kite on the water from the beach.
- 3) Rescue of a distressed but unconscious kiteboarder with kite on the water from the beach.
- 4) Rescue of a distressed but conscious kiteboarder with kite on the water from a boat.
- 5) Rescue of a distressed but unconscious kiteboarder with kite on the water from a boat.

Emphasize basic procedures for dealing with powered kites including safe capture, depowering and instructing a conscious kiteboarder on how to manage the kite prior to rescue if necessary. A "how to" video on CD should be released in coming months depicting approaches for handling several kiteboarder rescue scenarios and is planned to be available for a nominal charge.

g. Check in periodically with the lifeguards and captain in person and by email for convenience. Ask how things are going, if they have suggestions or specific problems. Meet with local riders; make them aware of problem areas as well as the general and local safe kiteboarding guidelines. Ask them to help to self enforce these guidelines. If necessary ask some of the local leaders in the riding community to informally help to enforce guidelines on an as available basis at local launches.

2. Public Good Works

The Maui Chapter of the HKA is very frequently involved in work on landscaping at the city hall, beach cleanups and other good works that benefit the public. They also did significant cleanup activities at kite beach in Maui initially and do regular maintenance on the area. They have formed valuable liaisons in the city through these acts and have built public good will. The Oahu Chapter of the HKA developed a charity event that included riding between two islands near Oahu with donations given to charity. This event would garner substantial media attention and public good will for the sport. Many other types of public events or services could be planned and implemented to good effect.

3. Kite Nights

Regular club or association flys could be scheduled and run through either the general membership or local merchant members, ideally through local instructors. These flys would include hands on practice with trainer, smaller

traction kites and even traction kites for body dragging if feasible. Proper techniques could be demonstrated for kite control, launching and landing, water relaunching and related issues. People would be encouraged to ask questions, bring in gear for tuning tips, etc. The events could be wrapped by a potluck dinner, barbeque, meeting at a local sports bar, etc. The events provide a good opportunity for picking up students, new members and for spreading public good will.

F. Tips for Negotiating to Maintain or Restore Access
A recent article that appeared in Kiteboarding Magazine is reproduced below that
addresses this critical task. It was written by two AKA Kiteboarding Committee
members along with a president of the HKA.
"STAYING ALIVE"

BY MARTIN KIRK, RYAN LEVINSON AND DONNEL NUNES

The three authors have collaborated previously but this is the first time collectively in print. They bring to the table many successful years of negotiating with government agencies that have the potential to restrict our sport. The purpose of this article is to offer some of their helpful suggestions which associations or groups wishing to start up can implement in their own fashion to keep kiteboarding a growing sport. They invite feedback from you and your group to keep this list of suggestions growing.

- 1) Anticipating and understanding that challenges will occur, position your group strategically and have a 'point person' rather than a committee as a contact. This "point person" should reflect the collective mission of your association.
- 2) Having a contact person is important for and to government agencies when they

need to take some immediate action or want some desired result.

- 3) This 'dedicated' point person will have already made himself or herself known through personal visits, phone calls, or letters to the appropriate agencies on behalf of the association.
- 4) Important that the point person have integrity and keeps his/her business separate

from the association; i.e. no business promotion through the association at the exclusion of other related businesses.

- 5) Be proactive. This means get started early. Don't wait for government agencies to step in first.
- 6) By "get started early' we mean...
- develop relationships with lifeguards and all appropriate government agencies through free training, beach cleanups, kids' kite clinics; communicate with all council members especially the ones who support what your group is doing; and collaborate with other ocean users
- have your safety procedures outlined and in place
- conduct regular meetings

- keep everyone informed through email postings
- secure participation from local shops, riders and manufacturers
- 7) Get your organization's name circulating in the public through some of the above suggestions. Very important to be recognized as a community-involved club. Having this recognition will make it much more likely the local governments will approach your point person before taking any actions to the club's detriment, if challenges/complaints occur.
- 8) Train local safety and rescue personnel how to deal with emergency situations that involve a kite, including how to depower and safely secure a runaway kite and typical injuries to expect when approaching a rider who is down. Important note: training should be done by qualified instructors.
- 9) Participate regularly in neighborhood and community meetings. Advocate education to these public bodies to dispel myths about our sport. Research statistical information to back up your statements. A well-planned presentation will demonstrate professionalism and add to the integrity of your organization.
- 10) Create, produce, and install pre-approved, by association and local government agencies, signs to educate and inform public on designated launch sites and safety guidelines.
- 11) Understand most relationships don't develop overnight and be patient with the process. Think long range. Always act in the spirit of cooperation and think before speaking with agencies.
- 12) Reinstating areas that have been banned will involve much more delicate maneuvering. Following items 1-11 will not necessarily ensure success, but without these failure is guaranteed. Having alternate plans in place, whether these plans include another site to use or a modified plan for agencies to consider is always a prudent way to approach negotiations. Giving these governing agencies choices, if they are intent on banning the sport in certain areas, may allow your group to keep some favorite sites alive and well. Good luck and keep it safe!

Martin Kirk is the president of the Hawaii Kiteboarding Association, Maui Chapter (martin@hawaiikiteboardingassociation.org); Ryan Levinson is the president of the San Diego Kitesurfing Association (rmlsd@aol.com., both are members of the AKA Kiteboarding Committee); and Donnel Nunes is president of the Hawaii Kiteboarding Association, Oahu Chapter (donnel@hawaiikiteboardingassociation.org)

The AKA Kiteboarding Committee is committed to improving safety and helping to maintain kiteboarding access. Please visit our website at: http://www.aka.kite.org for tips on forming kiteboarding associations and clubs, building community involvement in the sport, negotiating access issues, safe kiteboarding guidelines and much more.

G. Tips for Managing Rider Problems (PENDING)

VIII. AKA Kiteboarding Committee [top]

The AKA Kiteboarding Committee has been formed to promote safe kiteboarding practices nationwide through a variety of initiatives. The committee may be contact by email at: kitesurf@aka.kite.org. It is comprised of leaders in kiteboarding from various parts of the USA, including:

Jeff Chang

Hawaiian Kiteboarding Association -Oahu Chapter Secretary Offdalip.com

Kitesurftech.com

Gilles Fumat

President of Bump and Jump bumpandjump.com

Jeff Howard

President of Precision Kite Company

Rick lossi

Chairman, AKA Kiteboarding Committee

Florida Kitesurfing Association Director

Martin Kirk

President Hawaii Kiteboarding Association - Maui Chapter

Kiteboarding School of Maui www.ksmaui.com

Ryan Levinson

President of the San Diego Kiteboarding Association

Head Instructor with West Coast Kiteboarding www.westcoastkiteboarding.com

Paul Menta

Florida Kitesurfing Association Director

PASA Head Kiteboarding Instructor

President of Kitesurf the Earth kitesurftheearth.com